

## Disaster Relief and Preparedness

In September, 2006, I completed my work on the House Democratic Caucus' [Katrina Task Force report](#)

The report is a scathing analysis of the current administration's failure to provide adequate and timely post-Katrina disaster relief. It will serve as a framework for lawmakers to craft legislation to restructure and improve disaster relief policies. These measures will not only improve the conditions in the Gulf Coast region, but will also provide for more effective disaster relief and preparedness for the future.

### **Response, Relief, and Recovery: Katrina and Beyond**

#### *Recommendations for Legislative Action*

#### Highlights:

- Agencies responsible for disaster preparedness and recovery should employ personnel and methods that recognize the cultural and linguistic diversity of the regions in need of assistance. All official documents and support materials should be made available in languages appropriate for all populations in the region.
- Relieve FEMA of its recovery mission and reassign those responsibilities to the appropriate federal agencies. These agencies are tasked with recovery efforts in the areas of housing, education, public infrastructure, healthcare, and economic development.
- Investigate the Katrina claims practices of insurance companies that contract with the National Flood Insurance Program.
- Repeal the federal antitrust exemption as it relates to price-fixing, bid-rigging, or market allocation in the market for property insurance.
- Establish stronger federal oversight of property insurance practices.
- Establish all-perils disaster insurance coverage backed by the federal government.
- Rebuild levees and flood controls to higher standards.
- Reform FEMA contract procedures to eliminate cost-plus noncompetitive contracts.
- Re-equip National Guard units to fulfill civil support mission.
- Improve the Federal Logistics System.
- Establish Waterborne Fuel Delivery Capability.

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